

Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza Advisory Committee Report

Catherine G. Dauler, Chair

October 3, 2016

As a result of several open houses and a design charrette, on May 18, 2016, Council directed Derck & Edson to proceed with the design development for the Martin Luther King, Jr., Plaza. The goal was to have bid documents ready for release in June and award the construction of the project in July, 2016. On June 6, Council President appointed a committee to review and make recommendation to Council on the design, content and installation of commemorative elements in the MLK Plaza by September 1, 2016. The committee members and representations were:

From Council:	Cathy Dauler, Chair Janet Engeman Theresa Lafer Jesse Barlow (Alternate)
From Planning Commission:	Charles Dumas
From Design Review Board:	Rick Bryant
From Art in Public Places:	Elizabeth Goreham
From Abutting Property Owners:	Jonathan Friedman Ray or Ron Agostinelli
From DSCID:	Dave Richards
Design Charrette Subcommittee:	Carlos Wiley Carol Eicher AnneMarie Mingo Barbara Farmer Wanda Knight Gary Abdullah

The Committee was instructed to consider time and resources when selecting the words and likenesses of Dr. King, consider elements that were appropriate for an active public place, and to recommend funding mechanisms for any elements that exceeded the stated budget of \$70,000 for these commemorative elements.

The MLK Plaza Advisory Committee met six times between June 21 and September 20. Access to Dr. King's words and images could require long lead times and significant cost, and with the plaza design being prepared, the committee was intent on the plaza not looking incomplete even if items were added in phases.

The committee reviewed several images from Dr. King's speech at Rec Hall in 1965. The University Archivist attended a meeting and suggested the Borough might use several photos from that speech which belonged to Penn State and could be obtained for a modest cost. The committee felt strongly that the plaza should include a timeline of significant events in the life of Dr. King but tie in local events, as well. Much time was spent reflecting on local and national events and refining this list. The committee also

felt the pillars at the Beaver Avenue/Fraser Street intersection be used to represent not only Dr. King's philosophies, but continuing efforts for social justice.

In its meeting of September 20, 2016, the MLK Plaza Advisory Committee noted that the work of the committee was not complete, despite significant progress even beyond the original reporting deadline. The committee felt there are several significant items on which to continue working, but that a subset of the group could manage that work.

A recommendation was made at this final meeting to establish a Performing Arts Trust that would ensure an ongoing effort to coordinate diverse performances for the new public space. While this was beyond the scope of the MLK Plaza Advisory Committee, the suggestion is worthy of consideration and development.

Therefore, the MLK Plaza Advisory Committee recommends:

- 1) Council proceed with the development of the plaza as designed.
- 2) Council approve the use of two photos from the Penn State collection for the graphic wall element of the MLK Plaza.
- 3) Timeline markers be included with events of Dr. King's life and other events related to social justice. The recommended list is included at the end of this report.
- 4) Brass plaques be included on each face of each of the six piers. Text for three plaques are included at the end of this report.
- 5) Since the original task is incomplete, the committee further recommends Council appoint an advisory committee to continue work on the plaza, perhaps a subset of the original committee. This committee would be charged with:
 - a) Recommending additions or modifications to the plaza, including the content of plaques.
 - b) Recommending funding sources for those modifications.
 - c) Developing a recommendation on the proposed Performing Arts Trust.
- 6) The advisory committee would:
 - a) Meet at least quarterly to consider matters related to the plaza.
 - b) Report annually to Council in January allowing recommendations to be considered with the Capital Improvement Program.
 - c) Have a three-year sunset.

Calvin Waller
First Black Penn State student
September 1899

Example of Granite Paver

Text for all pavers

Calvin Waller

First Black Penn State student
September 1899

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Born in Atlanta, Georgia
January 15, 1929

We Are Penn State

Football players vote to cancel game
November 5, 1946

Brown v. Board of Education

Ended legal segregation in public schools
May 17, 1954

Rosa Parks Arrested

Montgomery Bus Boycott
December 1955-December 1956

Mary Godfrey

First Black Penn State faculty member
Spring 1956

“Bombingham”

King’s Letter from Birmingham Jail
Church bomb kills 4 girls
April/September 1963

March on Washington, D.C.

For Jobs and Freedom
August 28, 1963

Civil Rights Act of 1964

Mississippi Summer
July 1964

Nobel Peace Prize

Awarded to Martin Luther King, Jr.
October 14, 1964

Selma to Montgomery March

Voting Rights Act of 1965
March/August, 1965

Riverside Church Speech

Against Vietnam War
April 4, 1967

Poor People’s Campaign

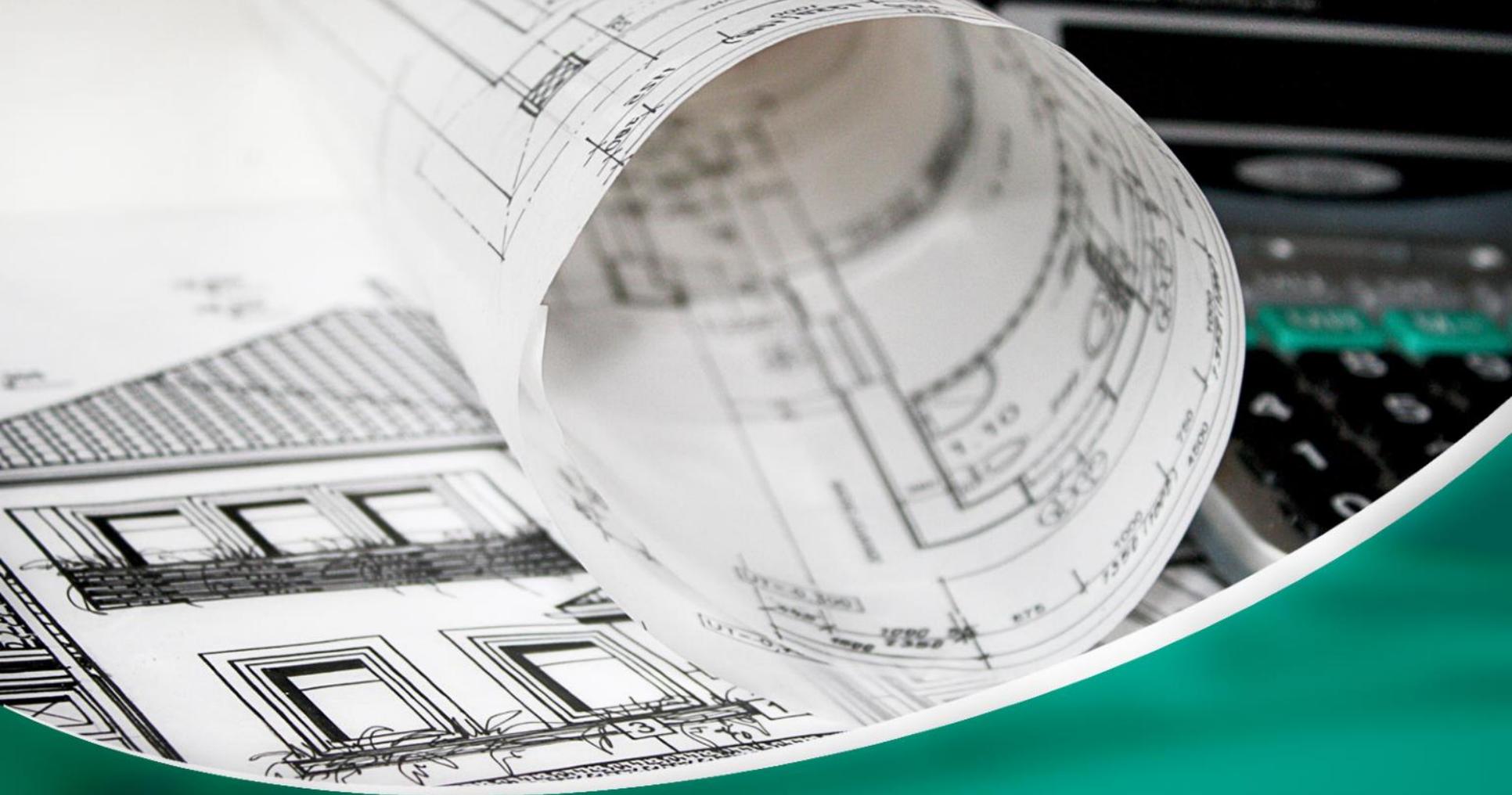
For Economic Justice
November 1967-June 1968

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee
April 4, 1968

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Legislation for National Holiday
November 2, 1983

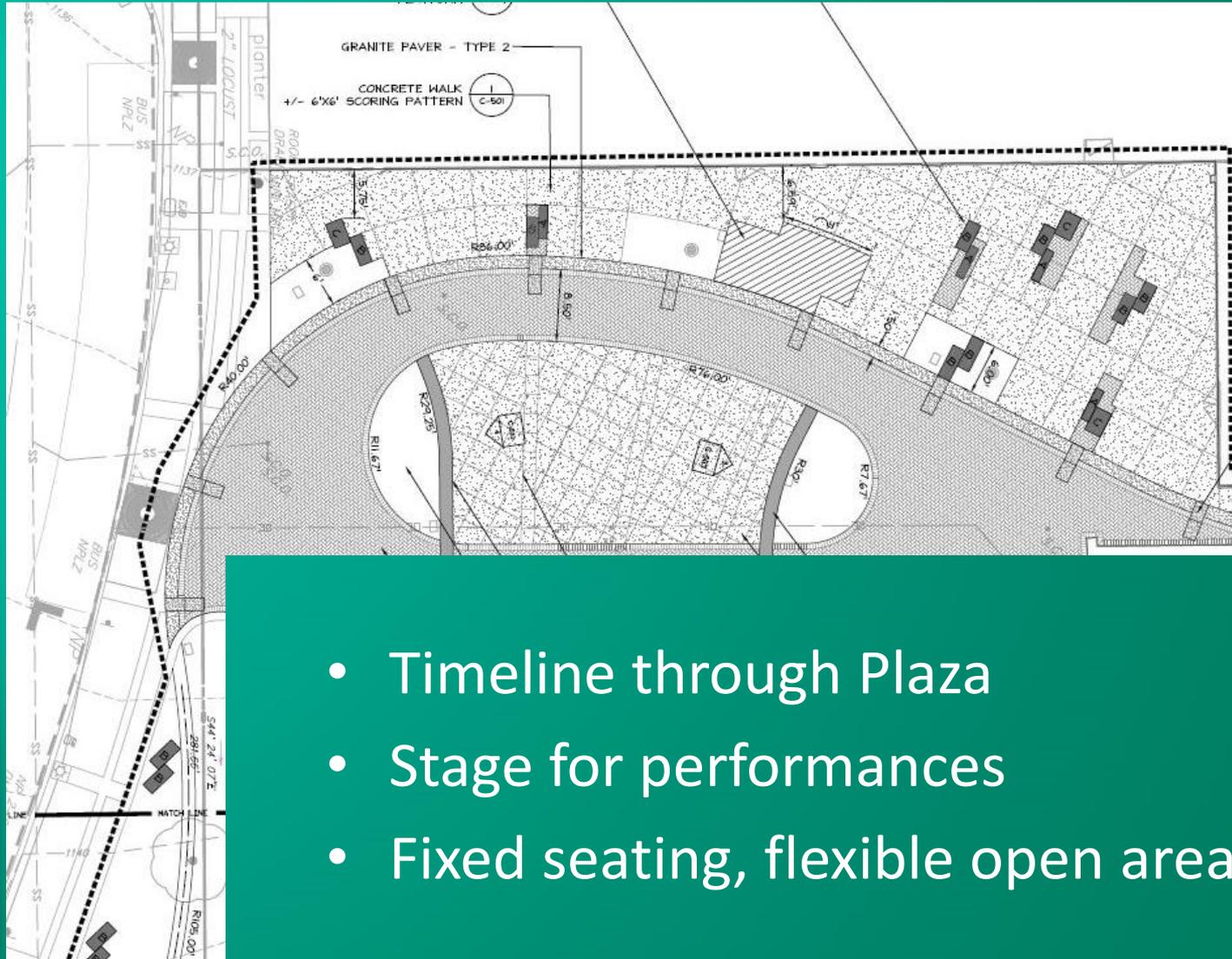


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MLK Plaza 2016



MLK Plaza Advisory Committee



- Timeline through Plaza
- Stage for performances
- Fixed seating, flexible open area

MLK Plaza Advisory Committee



MLK Plaza Advisory Committee



Fraser/Beaver Intersection

Committee Recommendations



Committee Recommendations (cont'd)

5. A continuing advisory committee:
 - i. Recommend changes, including plaques
 - ii. Recommending funding sources
 - iii. Performing Arts Trust recommendation
6. Proposed committee structure:
 - i. Meet at least quarterly
 - ii. Report to Council annually
 - iii. Sunset in three years

COMING SOON:
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. PLAZA

